

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 10, 2006

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 1237**

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**Introduced by Senator Maldonado**

February 6, 2006

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An act to amend Section 35401 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1237, as amended, Maldonado. Vehicles: combination length.

Existing law prohibits any combination of vehicles coupled together, including any attachments, from exceeding a total length of 65 feet, with certain, specified exceptions. Existing law, which becomes inoperative on January 1, 2007, exempts a combination of vehicles from the specified length limitation, and authorizes the combination to have a total length of not more than 75 feet, if the combination (1) consisted of a motortruck and 2 trailers; (2) a trailer in the combination does not exceed 28 feet 6 inches in length; (3) the combination was used exclusively to transport agricultural products from the field to the first point of handling and return, and each direction of transport did not exceed 80 miles; and (4) the combination was not operated on a highway that is designated as a national network route.

~~This bill would delete the January 1, 2007, inoperative date, thereby continuing the exemption indefinitely. This bill would delete the exemptions described above.~~ The bill would also delete obsolete language.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 35401 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

35401. (a) Except as provided in subdivisions (b), (c), and (d), ~~no combination of vehicles coupled together, including any attachments, may exceed~~ *a combination of vehicles coupled together, including attachments, may not exceed* a total length of 65 feet.

(b) (1) A combination of vehicles coupled together, including ~~any attachments, which~~ *attachments, that* consists of a truck tractor, a semitrailer, and a semitrailer or trailer, may not exceed a total length of 75 feet, if the length of neither the semitrailers nor the trailer in the combination of vehicles exceeds 28 feet 6 inches.

(2) A B-train assembly is excluded from the measurement of semitrailer length when used between the first and second semitrailers of a truck tractor-semitrailer-semitrailer combination of vehicles. However, if there is no second semitrailer mounted to the B-train assembly, it shall be included in the length measurement of the semitrailer to which it is attached.

~~(3) A combination of vehicles coupled together, including any attachments, may have a total length of not more than 75 feet, if all of the following apply:~~

~~(A) The combination of vehicles consists of a motortruck and two trailers.~~

~~(B) A trailer in the combination does not exceed 28 feet 6 inches in length.~~

~~(C) The combination is used exclusively to transport agricultural products from the field to the first point of handling and return, and each direction of transport does not exceed 80 miles.~~

~~(D) The combination is not operated on a highway designated by the United States Department of Transportation as a national network route.~~

(c) (1) A tow truck in combination with a single disabled vehicle or a single abandoned vehicle that is authorized to travel on the highways by this chapter is exempt from subdivision (a) when operating under a valid annual transportation permit.

1 (2) A tow truck, in combination with a disabled or abandoned  
2 combination of vehicles that are authorized to travel on the  
3 highways by this chapter, is exempt from subdivision (a) when  
4 operating under a valid annual transportation permit and within a  
5 100-mile radius of the location specified in the permit.

6 (3) A tow truck may exceed the 100-mile radius restriction  
7 imposed under paragraph (2) if a single trip permit is obtained  
8 from the Department of Transportation.

9 (d) ~~Any~~ A city or county may, by ordinance, prohibit a  
10 combination of vehicles of a total length in excess of 60 feet  
11 upon highways under its respective jurisdiction. The ordinance  
12 may not be effective until appropriate signs are erected indicating  
13 either the streets affected by the ordinance or the streets not  
14 affected, as the local authority determines will best serve to give  
15 notice of the ordinance.

16 (e) ~~Any~~ A city or county, upon a determination that a highway  
17 or portion of highway under its jurisdiction cannot, in  
18 consideration of public safety, sustain the operation of trailers or  
19 semitrailers of the maximum kingpin to rearmost axle distances  
20 permitted under Section 35400, may, by ordinance, establish  
21 lesser distances consistent with the maximum distances that the  
22 highway or highway portion can sustain, except that a city or  
23 county may not restrict the kingpin to rearmost axle measurement  
24 to less than 38 feet on those highways or highway portions. ~~Any~~  
25 A city or county considering the adoption of an ordinance shall  
26 consider, but not be limited to, consideration of, all of the  
27 following:

28 (1) A comparison of the operating characteristics of the  
29 vehicles to be limited as compared to operating characteristics of  
30 other vehicles regulated by this code.

31 (2) Actual traffic volume.

32 (3) Frequency of accidents.

33 (4) Any other relevant data.

34 In addition, the city or county may appoint an advisory  
35 committee consisting of local representatives of those interests  
36 ~~which~~ *that* are likely to be affected and shall consider the  
37 recommendations of the advisory committee in adopting the  
38 ordinance. The ordinance may not be effective until appropriate  
39 signs are erected indicating the highways or highway portions  
40 affected by the ordinance.

1 This subdivision shall only become operative upon the  
2 adoption of an enabling ordinance by a city or county.

3 (f) Whenever, in the judgment of the Department of  
4 Transportation, ~~any~~ a state highway cannot, in consideration of  
5 public safety, sustain the operation of trailers or semitrailers of  
6 the maximum kingpin to rearmost axle distances permitted under  
7 Section 35400, the director, in consultation with the Department  
8 of the California Highway Patrol, shall compile data on total  
9 traffic volume, frequency of use by vehicles covered by this  
10 subdivision, accidents involving these vehicles, and other  
11 relevant data to assess whether these vehicles are a threat to  
12 public safety and should be excluded from the highway or  
13 highway segment. The study, containing the conclusions and  
14 recommendations of the director, shall be submitted to the  
15 Secretary of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.  
16 Unless otherwise notified by the secretary, the director shall hold  
17 public hearings in accordance with the procedures set forth in  
18 Article 3 (commencing with Section 35650) of Chapter 5 for the  
19 purpose of determining the maximum kingpin to rear axle length,  
20 which shall be not less than 38 feet, that the highway or highway  
21 segment can sustain without unreasonable threat to the safety of  
22 the public. Upon the basis of the findings, the Director of  
23 Transportation shall declare in writing the maximum kingpin to  
24 rear axle lengths which can be maintained with safety upon the  
25 highway. Following the declaration of maximum lengths as  
26 provided by this subdivision, the Department of Transportation  
27 shall erect suitable signs at each end of the affected portion of the  
28 highway and at any other points that the Department of  
29 Transportation determines to be necessary to give adequate  
30 notice of the length limits.

31 The Department of Transportation, in consultation with the  
32 Department of the California Highway Patrol, shall compile  
33 traffic volume, geometric, and other relevant data, to assess the  
34 maximum kingpin to rearmost axle distance of vehicle  
35 combinations appropriate for those state highways or portion of  
36 highways, affected by this section, that cannot safely  
37 accommodate trailers or semitrailers of the maximum kingpin to  
38 rearmost axle distances permitted under Section 35400.

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